United Nations S/2013/406

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 July 2013

Original: English

Letter dated 5 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Kingdom of Morocco in December 2012 (see annex).

The report was prepared under my supervision, in consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed **Loulichki**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

13-38890 (E) 220713

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 5 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Morocco (December 2012)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Morocco, the Security Council held 34 meetings (20 public, 1 private and 13 consultations of the whole). The Council adopted 18 outcomes (7 resolutions, 4 presidential statements, 6 press statements and 1 element to the press).

At the initiative of Morocco, the Security Council held a high-level debate entitled "The Sahel: towards a more comprehensive and coordinated approach", a briefing on inter-mission cooperation and an open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding.

African issues were at the forefront of the agenda of the Security Council, namely the situation in Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, the Sudan and South Sudan, Liberia and the Central African region. The Council also examined a number of issues related to the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Afghanistan and Timor-Leste were also on the programme of work of the Council.

In addition, the Security Council held a debate and adopted two resolutions on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, respectively, and extended the sanctions regimes established pursuant to violations 1267 (1999), 1988 (2011) and 1989 (2011). Non-proliferation issues related to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were also examined.

Africa

The situation in Mali[1]

On 5 December, the Security Council held a briefing followed by consultations of the whole on the situation in Mali. During the briefing, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman introduced the report of the Secretary-General on Mali (S/2012/894) as requested by resolution 2071 (2012). The Under-Secretary-General provided an overview of the situation in Mali, outlined efforts undertaken by the United Nations system and subregional, regional and international actors in response to the Malian crisis and towards the implementation of the aforementioned resolution. He also presented the recommendations of the Secretary-General on this matter.

[1] The Security Council adopted, on 20 December 2012, presidential note S/2012/961 establishing an agenda item entitled "The situation in Mali". Previously this situation was discussed under the agenda item entitled "Peace and security in Africa".

The Under-Secretary-General emphasized that it is critical that the key political actors in Mali arrive at a unified vision as soon as possible if they are to effectively focus efforts on the main transition challenges in implementing an inclusive national dialogue aimed at enabling a full restoration of constitutional order and on arriving at a negotiated political solution to the crisis with armed groups who have cut off all ties with terrorist elements. He also briefed the members on the United Nations system's actions to support the political process, as requested by the transitional Malian authorities. He noted that should the Security Council decide to authorize the deployment of an African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), any operations conducted by the force would need to be well-planned, -coordinated and -implemented.

In consultations of the whole, Security Council members discussed recent developments in Mali, the recommendations of the Secretary-General and options for United Nations support for AFISMA. Council members reiterated the importance of a dual-track approach that addressed both political and security aspects of the Malian crisis. Some Council members expressed the urgent need for the Council to respond affirmatively to the request formulated by the transitional Government of Mali, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the African Union for authorizing the deployment of an African-led force to assist Malian armed forces in restoring the country's territorial integrity and reducing the threat posed by terrorist groups in the north of Mali. At the end of the meeting, Council members requested the Department of Field Support to present to the Council a detailed report on the costs and modalities for United Nations assistance for AFISMA, as requested by resolution 2071 (2012).

On 11 December, Security Council members adopted a press statement (SC/10851) that condemned the arrest, on 10 December 2012, of the interim Prime Minister of Mali, Cheick Modibo Diarra, by members of the Malian armed forces, which led to the resignation of the Prime Minister and the dismissal of the transitional Government of Mali. Council members urged the transitional authorities of Mali to expeditiously develop a political transitional road map, through broad-based and inclusive political dialogue, to fully restore constitutional order and national unity, including through the holding of peaceful, inclusive and credible elections as soon as possible.

On 20 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2085 (2012), authorizing the deployment of AFISMA and requesting the Secretary-General to establish, in consultation with national authorities, a multidisciplinary United Nations presence in Mali. Following this adoption, the interim Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations speaking on behalf of ECOWAS and the Permanent Observer of the African Union made statements praising the adoption of resolution 2085 (2012).

Sudan and South Sudan

On 6 December, the Security Council was briefed by Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations who presented the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) (S/2012/890) and reported on the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012).

The Assistant Secretary-General deplored the delay in the implementation of the 20 June 2011 agreements on temporary institutions, particularly in the establishment of a legislative council and police service of Abyei. He also said that UNISFA had taken steps to ensure a safe migration season and avoid conflicts between the Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka communities.

On the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012), the Assistant Secretary-General reiterated the urgent need to implement the safe demilitarized border zone and the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, and deplored the continuous fighting in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/North, encouraging the parties to engage swiftly in direct negotiations in order to agree on an immediate cessation of hostilities that would make it possible to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

During the ensuing consultations of the whole, Security Council members unanimously commended UNISFA engagement and insisted on the necessity of a swift implementation of the 27 September 2012 agreements. On the issue of the final status of Abyei, some delegations expressed their support to the African Union High-level Implementation Panel proposition while others expressed their concerns towards any approach that would impose a solution upon a party, and were in favour of a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution.

On 18 December, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Hailé Menkerios, briefed the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012). He informed the members about the meetings of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee held during the period under consideration, deploring that despite the agreement reached on the operational aspects of the safe demilitarized border zone and the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, no significant progress was to be reported.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, who was also present during the meeting, informed Security Council members of the increase in fighting in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, which had led to the aggravation of the humanitarian situation and the amplification of the number of refugees arriving in the neighbouring countries.

Security Council members reiterated the importance of a swift implementation of all the 27 September 2012 agreements, as well as the transitional arrangements for Abyei. Some members of the Council also reiterated their concerns about the humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States and all of them called for direct talks between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/North to resolve the conflict in the two regions.

On 6 December, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Néstor Osorio, presented to the Security Council the 90-day report on the work of the Sudan Sanctions Committee covering the period from 20 September to 6 December 2012.

On 13 December, the Security Council was briefed in a public meeting by Fatou Bensouda, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, on the sixteenth report to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005). The Permanent

Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations also made a statement. The Council members exchanged views on this issue.

South Sudan

The members of the Security Council issued, on 21 December, a press statement (SC/10873) in which they strongly deplored the shooting down, on the same day in Jonglei State (South Sudan), by the Sudan People's Liberation Army, of an United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) helicopter with four Russian crew members aboard, all of whom were confirmed dead. While extending their condolences to the families of the crew members and to the Government of the Russian Federation, Council members stressed that this accident constituted a grave violation of the Status of Forces Agreement of 8 August 2011 and jeopardized the UNMISS operations. They strongly urged UNMISS and the Government of South Sudan to conduct a swift and thorough investigation of the accident and the Government of South Sudan to hold accountable those responsible for the accident and take all necessary measures to avoid such tragic accidents in the future.

Liberia sanctions

On 6 December, the Security Council members were briefed in consultations of the whole by Masood Khan, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) concerning Liberia. He informed Council members of the conclusions and main findings of the final report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia.

The Security Council members commended the Permanent Representative for his work as Chair of the 1521 Committee. They also commended the work of the Panel of Experts, especially on the criminal and financial networks related to pro-Gbagbo supporters as well as on mercenaries and militias in the eastern part of Liberia. Council members encouraged closer cooperation between the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire on the aforementioned issues.

On 12 December, the Security Council extended for one year its sanctions measures concerning Liberia, along with the mandate of the Panel of Experts, by unanimously adopting resolution 2079 (2012).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 7 December, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, during which Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous briefed the Council on the security and humanitarian situation on the ground following the entry of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) to Goma and on measures taken by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) following this event. The Under-Secretary-General also informed Council members about the ongoing talks in Kampala. United Nations Military Adviser General Babacar Gaye informed the Council of the results of his visit to the region to discuss the option of setting up an international neutral force as called for by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Council members expressed grave concern on the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and condemned M23 activities. They also

expressed serious concern over the security of civilians currently living in areas controlled by M23 and commended the work undertaken by MONUSCO to protect civilians.

On 18 December, Security Council members held consultations of the whole to examine the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the light of recent troop movements on the outskirts of Goma. Susana Malcorra, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, briefed Council members on the situation on the ground, on the efforts of the Secretary-General and on the outcome of her recent visit to the region. She informed Council members about the intention of the Secretary-General to put in place a regional framework of dialogue comprising Heads of State of the region in order to address the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the whole region, to designate a Special Envoy for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes Region and to present options for the reinforcement of MONUSCO. During this meeting, while reiterating their concerns about the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Council members welcomed the efforts and initiatives of the Secretary-General to deal, in an urgent manner, with this situation. It was suggested that the Security Council undertake a visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the course of the following year.

Peace and security in Africa (Sahel region)

On 10 December, the Security Council held a ministerial-level debate entitled "The Sahel: towards a more comprehensive and coordinated approach", which was chaired by Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, with the participation of a number of Ministers and high-level dignitaries.

The Secretary-General, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Minister for State and Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of ECOWAS, briefed the Security Council.

The representatives of Chad on behalf of the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, the African Union, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab Maghreb Union, the World Bank and the African Development Bank participated in this high-level debate.

The Secretary-General highlighted that the Sahel region faces a series of interrelated challenges that affect countries of the region, their Governments and their people and that they need the full support of the United Nations.

Romano Prodi, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, emphasized the need for an integrated strategy of the United Nations for this region as well as closer cooperation between all those affected in the Sahel region in order to address these challenges comprehensively. He added that a donor meeting would be organized very soon in support of the Sahel States to mobilize resources for the region's immediate and long-term needs.

António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, briefed the Security Council about the humanitarian situation in the Sahel region and in particular the challenges posed by the situation in Mali.

Security Council members expressed grave concern over the threats and challenges facing the Sahel region and emphasized the need for an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach in dealing with these threats as well as their root causes. Addressing terrorism and transnational organized criminal activities in the Sahel was an issue of particular concern. Council members also called for the finalization of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, as requested by resolution 2056 (2012), as soon as possible.

The Security Council members adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/26) recognizing the importance of a comprehensive approach encompassing security, development and humanitarian issues to address the immediate and long-term needs of the Sahel region and stressing the importance of strengthening transregional, interregional and international cooperation on the basis of common and shared responsibility, economic and social development, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The Council encouraged the Special Envoy to pursue his efforts to coordinate bilateral, interregional and international response and support for the Sahel region and for a more coherent and coordinated approach of all United Nations entities involved in this region.

Guinea-Bissau

On 11 December, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Joseph Mutaboba, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, briefed the Council on the recent developments in the country as well as on the implementation of resolution 2048 (2012).

During the ensuing consultations of the whole, Security Council members expressed concerns about the continuing political stalemate in Guinea-Bissau and reiterated their call for the need for the full restoration of the constitutional order as well as for an inclusive national dialogue and coordination between the different stakeholders. In addition, Council members condemned the attack of a military base and expressed their concerns about the violations of human rights and the reported increase in drug trafficking. They encouraged ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, in collaboration with the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union, to support the political process.

During the same consultations, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012) concerning Guinea-Bissau and Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Mohammed Loulichki, presented to the Security Council the report on the work of the Committee covering the period from 19 June to 11 December 2012.

The Security Council members issued a press statement on 13 December (SC/10857) reiterating their concerns and expectations raised during the consultations.

Lord's Resistance Army/United Nations Office for Central Africa

On 18 December, the Security Council held a briefing during which Abou Moussa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), reported on the situation in the Central African region and the efforts to combat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The representative of the Central African Republic also participated in this

meeting. The Special Representative outlined the work of UNOCA in enhancing cooperation and coordination with States and regional organizations and on advances made in the region to address existing challenges. On the subject of LRA, he announced that his office continued to coordinate the implementation of a regional strategy to address the LRA threat.

Members of the Security Council applauded the work undertaken by UNOCA. After condemning the atrocities committed by LRA, Council members commended the efforts made by Central African States, regional and international organizations towards the implementation of the United Nations regional strategy that has a positive impact in reducing the destabilizing activities of LRA.

On 19 December, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/28) in which it strongly condemned the attacks carried out by LRA in the Central African region and reiterated its support for the United Nations regional strategy while requesting a prioritized and sequential approach to its implementation.

Central African Republic

On 19 December, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the situation in the Central African Republic. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed Council members on the evolution of the situation on the ground pursuant to the attacks of the rebels since 10 December.

A press statement (SC/10867) issued after the meeting condemned the rebels' attacks and associated human rights abuses and called for the cessation of hostilities, the respect of the Libreville Global Peace Agreement and the enhancement of political dialogue. Security Council members underlined that those undermining the process of consolidating peace, security and stability in the Central African Republic should be held accountable.

A second press statement issued on 27 December (SC/10874) reiterated the Security Council's condemnation of the continued attacks of the "Seleka" coalition of armed groups and demanded their withdrawal from captured cities and the cessation of any further advance towards the city of Bangui. They welcomed the efforts of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and called on all parties to abide by the decisions of the ECCAS summit held in N'Djamena on 21 December 2012, and to engage in good faith in the negotiations set to take place in Libreville.

Middle East

Iraq and Kuwait

On 1 December, the members of the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/10843) in which they welcomed the continued cooperation of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait, and the continued commitment of Iraq to full implementation of its outstanding obligations under the relevant Council resolutions related to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council reaffirmed the importance of Iraq achieving international standing equal to that which it held prior to the adoption of resolutions pertaining specifically to it, beginning with resolution 661 (1990), taking into account the

remaining obligations of Iraq identified in the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 1859 (2008).

The members of the Security Council further welcomed the joint request of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait for the United Nations to reactivate the Iraq-Kuwait boundary maintenance project. They recognized the cooperation of Kuwait in supporting the Iraq-Kuwait boundary maintenance project and called on Iraq to complete the field maintenance work in a timely manner.

On 18 December, the Security Council met in consultations of the whole to receive a briefing from Gennady Tarasov, the High-level Coordinator on the issue of the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains, as well as the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives seized by Iraq.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the continued cooperation between the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait, as well as the efforts and commitment of Iraq to implement all outstanding obligations under the relevant Council resolutions.

As the financing of the High-level Coordinator position was expiring on 31 December 2012, members of the Security Council discussed the options recommended by the Secretary-General for the future of this mandate.

Yemen

On 4 December, Jamal Benomar, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, briefed the Security Council on recent developments in Yemen with regard to the political, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic situation.

The Special Adviser informed the Security Council about the upcoming National Dialogue Conference. He said that the Conference could indeed be the "crucible for a new Yemen", with a diverse composition and the strong commitment of all Yemenis. He added that the transition in Yemen was largely on track and moving forward despite the challenges, such as military restructuring, the serious threat of terrorism, blackouts and attacks on oil and gas pipelines that affected millions and caused massive revenue losses.

As the deteriorating socioeconomic situation could become an obstacle to progress, the Special Adviser appealed to the international community to continue to support Yemen in dealing with its challenges and improving the daily lives of Yemenis. He underlined that Yemenis needed to unite around President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour and continue to implement the terms of the Gulf Cooperation Council implementation mechanism by drafting and adopting a new constitution and holding national elections by February 2014.

During the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Security Council welcomed the positive progress being made with regard to the implementation of the transition agreement, including preparation for a national dialogue process, and called for the latter to be inclusive and to be held as soon as possible.

The Security Council members voiced their full support for the country's transition process and praised efforts made by the Yemeni Government and, in particular, by the President of Yemen, whose strong and effective stewardship in implementing the Gulf Cooperation Council's transition initiative was crucial.

Members of the Security Council commended the efforts of the Special Adviser. While welcoming progress in Yemen, they voiced their continued support for a Yemeni-led political process, as well as for the respect of the country's independence and territorial integrity.

Among other issues, Security Council members were concerned about the expansion of terrorist threats, the continuing violence in some regions, the humanitarian crisis and socioeconomic situation and the factions that remained outside of the transition process.

Members of the Council were unanimous in urging the international community to continue its support to the country at the present juncture. Council members also urged all groups in Yemen to refrain from provocation and to assist in the full implementation of Council resolutions, and they supported Government efforts to restructure the country's security forces.

The Permanent Representative of Yemen to United Nations said that the Government had made great strides in stabilizing the country and restructuring the armed forces. The Government was keen on having an inclusive, successful national dialogue on time to advance the goals of social peace, multilateral democracy, human rights and good governance.

Turning to socioeconomic difficulties, the Permanent Representative stressed that the situation was exacerbated by terrorist attacks. Extreme poverty and unemployment had increased, threatening the stability of the entire country and region. He called on the international community to provide adequate support for Yemen to face continued violence, as well as to alleviate deteriorating socioeconomic conditions.

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

On 12 December, the Security Council held a private meeting with the troop- and police-contributing countries to UNDOF. In the consultation of the whole on 17 December, the Security Council received a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on UNDOF activities and the incidents that had occurred in the areas of separation and limitation.

The Under-Secretary-General noted that the Secretary-General had reflected in his report (S/2012/897) that the situation in the UNDOF area of operations had evolved owing to the domestic instability in the Syrian Arab Republic, as demonstrated by the military activities and security incidents in the area of separation and limitation. He expressed his concerns that these incidents could escalate the tension between the two sides. The Under-Secretary-General also expressed his concerns at the clashes between the Syrian armed forces and armed members of the opposition on 29 and 30 November, during which the UNDOF troop rotation's convoy came under fire along the road between UNDOF headquarters and the Damascus international airport. These incidents resulted in the injury of five UNDOF personnel, two seriously.

Members of the Security Council underlined the stabilizing role of UNDOF and expressed their concerns over the Syrian crisis spillover into the UNDOF area of operations. They called on all sides to avoid further escalation and to take the necessary measures to prevent any military activity in the UNDOF area of operations. Members of the Council noted the unprecedented challenges facing

UNDOF and condemned the attack of 29 November and any act that would put UNDOF personnel at risk. They underlined the need to provide UNDOF with the necessary support and to regularly inform the troop- and police-contributing countries on the evolution of the situation. The Council members expressed support for a further six-month renewal of the UNDOF mandate, as suggested in the report of the Secretary-General.

Some Security Council members indicated that the ultimate objective remained the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Syrian Golan and that more attention should be given to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

On 19 December, the Security Council, by its resolution 2084 (2012), extended the UNDOF mandate until 30 June 2013 and requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973).

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 19 December 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Security Council on the latest developments on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. He expressed the grave concern and disappointment of the Secretary-General at the Israeli announcement of approvals for 3,000 housing units in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and, most alarmingly, in the E-1 area, and the acceleration of other settlement construction. He recalled that settlement construction in the West Bank violated international law and was an obstacle to peace and urged the Government of Israel to heed the wide international calls to rescind these plans.

He called on Israel to resume the Palestinian revenue transfers without delay, affirming the importance of direct talks to resolve any outstanding financial claims. He expressed the continued concern about the approximately 4,400 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centres. He noted that the calm in Gaza brokered by Egypt on 21 November had largely held, but that it remained tenuous.

The Under-Secretary-General stated that the General Assembly vote of 29 November 2012 symbolized the growing international impatience with the longstanding occupation and a resounding endorsement of Palestinian aspirations to live in freedom and dignity in an independent State of their own, and side by side with Israel in peace and security. He added that there remained no substitute for negotiations for the two-State solution and that it was vital that the parties avoid confrontational statements and negative steps that further complicated a return to negotiations.

With regard to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Under-Secretary-General stressed that the conflict was in its twenty-second month and that violence and military confrontation had escalated dangerously. He added that during their recent respective visits to the region, the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General had witnessed first-hand the dire situation of the Syrian refugees. He noted that while it was important that the neighbours of the Syrian Arab Republic continue to allow those fleeing violence in the Syrian Arab Republic to enter their countries, helping those countries cope with the situation and address the needs of the refugees must be a priority for the international community. He

indicated that long-standing fears that the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic would seriously threaten the stability and security of its neighbours had intensified.

The Under-Secretary-General said that the situation in Lebanon remained severely affected by the Syrian crisis. The situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon remained generally quiet and Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace continued on an almost daily basis.

In the following consultations of the whole, many Security Council members called for the prompt resumption of direct negotiations and expressed their sincere hope that 2013 would be decisive for the two-State solution. They encouraged all relevant actors to spare no efforts to this end.

A number of delegations expressed serious concern at the increasing construction of the illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, in particular in East Jerusalem, and called upon Israel to put an end to them. Some delegations welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19, which accorded "non-member observer State" status to Palestine. Other delegations stated that negotiations remained the only path to establish a Palestinian State. A number of delegations expressed concern over the situation of thousands of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons. Some members called upon Israel to release Palestinian tax revenues. Other Security Council members called on Israel to halt all the illegal activities aimed at changing the demographic, religious and cultural character of the holy city of Jerusalem. Some members made reference to the blockade of Gaza.

On the subject of the Syrian Arab Republic, Security Council members expressed their serious concern at the growing violence and the increasing numbers of casualties, especially among women and children. Many delegations called for a political solution to the Syrian crisis and expressed their support for the efforts of the Joint Special Representative. Council members expressed concern at the political, security, humanitarian and economic implications of the Syrian crisis on its neighbours and called upon the international community to assist them in facing these challenges.

Syrian Arab Republic

On 17 December, the Security Council received a briefing, in consultations of the whole, from Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Under-Secretary-General deplored the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, which was a result of intensification of violence. She expressed concern for the protection of Palestinian refugees affected by violence in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Under-Secretary-General also expressed concern that insecurity continued to hamper distribution of aid in many areas of the Syrian Arab Republic, and that the humanitarian response continued in often very challenging circumstances. She announced the launch of a revised Syrian humanitarian response plan, as well as a revised regional refugee plan. She called for an improved response to bring assistance to affected populations and noted in this regard the need for the support of the Security Council to create an environment more conducive to the protection of the population affected by the conflict and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The Under-Secretary-General reiterated her call to the Government to expedite the approval of additional local partners to deliver assistance and to authorize more international non-governmental organizations to work in the Syrian Arab Republic. She stated that Government forces and the armed opposition were failing to protect civilian populations and abide by the rules of international humanitarian law. She called on the Security Council to make it clear that those responsible for the ongoing atrocities in the Syrian Arab Republic would be held accountable.

Security Council members expressed deep concern at the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the increasing number of Syrian refugees. They noted the shortage of funds for humanitarian assistance activities and underlined the need for more contributions to the United Nations humanitarian response plans. They commended the countries hosting Syrian refugees and expressed their concern at the attack against the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk.

Security Council members called on all armed parties to ensure the protection of the civilian population and to allow safe, timely and unimpeded access by humanitarian organizations to all areas affected by violence in order to enable the provision of assistance to those in need, as well as to refrain from creating obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Asia

Afghanistan

The Security Council held a debate on 19 December on the situation in Afghanistan. The meeting was attended by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ján Kubiš, and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, Zahir Tanin. The Special Representative presented the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implication for international peace and security.

The Special Representative highlighted that the security situation had witnessed some improvements in a number of areas during the period covered by the report compared with the previous year, despite the recent incidents that had occurred and caused civilian injuries. He also emphasized that sound and representative governance is central to the concept of transition and underpins sustainability. This includes a credible and widely accepted constitutional transfer of power with the presidential election to be held in 2014.

The Special Representative stressed that greater attention to tackling the narcotics industry, including by international donors, was also required. The increase in both cannabis and opium cultivation reported in this period must be a wake-up call, with the illicit economy being an active impediment to institutional development and sustainable growth.

The members of the Security Council stressed that the upcoming elections were of the utmost importance for the future of Afghanistan in the light of the scheduled drawdown of the international forces by the end of 2014 and the beginning of the transformation decade (2015-2024). It was said that the drawdown had been proceeding as expected while keeping in mind the delicate nature of a security transition at a time when terrorist threats persisted. Ending illegal drug

trafficking was also key in fighting terrorism, which gained funding from those activities. The members of the Council noted the role of the Council sanctions regime in the fight against terrorism. They also expressed strong support for the Afghan-led reconciliation process among Afghan factions and encouraged the Afghan authorities to foster the reintegration programme and dialogue for all those who renounce violence, have no links to international terrorist organizations, including Al-Qaida, and respect the Afghan Constitution, including its human rights provisions, notably the rights of women.

Most of the Security Council members also insisted on the principles of national leadership and ownership by the Afghans of the whole process, which was vital for the success of the transition period and for paving the way for a more secure and democratic Afghanistan. They also made a reference to the importance of different conferences held on Afghanistan, such as the Bonn and Tokyo Conferences, especially in laying out the long-term partnership between Afghanistan and the international community for the upcoming years. They also underlined that the future role of the United Nations in Afghanistan was going to be very important, especially in the wake of the drawdown of international forces by the end of 2014.

Timor-Leste

As the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) completed its mandate on 31 December 2012, the Security Council adopted, on 19 December, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/27), in which it welcomed the successful parliamentary and presidential elections held in 2012 and the improvement of the security situation.

The presidential statement emphasized the efforts made by the authorities of Timor-Leste in strengthening its institutions and human resources capacities. It also paid tribute to the work done by UNMIT, the country team and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in that sense. The Security Council underscored the importance of continued support to Timor-Leste as it embarked on the next stage of its development, beyond UNMIT.

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

On 5 December, the Security Council held a debate to consider the reports of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (S/2012/594 and S/2012/592, respectively). The Council received briefings by the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Judge Theodor Meron, and the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Judge Vagn Joensen. The Council also heard briefings by the Prosecutors of both Tribunals, Serge Brammertz and Hassan Bubacar Jallow. The Council was also briefed on the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (the Mechanism) and considered the report related to it (S/2012/849).

The President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia highlighted the progress made in relation to the completion strategy of the Tribunal and the launch of the Mechanism. He noted that despite some delays in certain trials with the end of all but three trials in 2013, the focus of the Tribunal's work would have moved firmly to the Appeals Chamber and would continue to seek out new

ways to avoid further delays. The President noted that the Mechanism had commenced operations at the Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania branch on 1 July 2012 and preparations were under way for the launch of the Mechanism's branch at The Hague. The Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia indicated that a major goal had been met in the past reporting period with the commencement in October of the last trial in this Tribunal and important progress also had been made in three other remaining trials. He also noted that the Appeals Division was preparing for an influx of appellate work. The Prosecutor indicated that the Office of the Prosecutor had increasingly turned its attention to promoting a smooth transition to the Mechanism.

The President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda indicated that the transition to the Arusha branch of the Mechanism was progressing according to plan since the Mechanism's opening on 1 July 2012. He noted that in the coming months the major challenges would be the continued transition of the remaining functions of the Tribunal to the Mechanism and the preparation of archives for handover amid the continued departure of staff. The Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda indicated that the focus at his Office for the past six months had been and would continue to be on the prosecution and completion of appeals, the preparation of the Office's records for archiving and handover to the Mechanism, and the completion of legacy and closure issues, as well as providing support to the Office of the Prosecutor of the Arusha branch of the Mechanism. He noted that the Office of the Prosecutor anticipated the timely conclusion of this appellate workload by 2014.

Security Council members noted with satisfaction that the completion of the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was on schedule and expressed their support for the transfer of cases to national jurisdictions as an important part of the completion strategy for the Tribunal. They expressed concern, however, regarding the matter of arresting the remaining fugitives and recalled the obligation of all countries to cooperate with the Tribunal. Council members noted with satisfaction that the Arusha branch of the Mechanism commenced its work on 1 July 2012, and expressed their hope that the branch of the Residual Mechanism in The Hague would begin its work on 1 July 2013, as scheduled.

Regarding the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, some Security Council members welcomed the fact that all cases, except those held up through delayed arrest warrants, would be completed as scheduled. They noted the recent decisions of the Tribunals and stated that all States should respect the judgements of the Tribunal. They indicated that cooperation from all parties was essential to the effectiveness of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Another view was expressed over the judicial validity of the recent decisions of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the continuous serious delays of the trial and appellate proceedings detrimental to the completion strategy of the Tribunal. It was stated that the Tribunal needed to seek completion of its work in accordance with the deadlines set down in resolution 1966 (2010).

Non-members of the Security Council also took part in this debate: Serbia was represented by its First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Rwanda were represented by their respective Permanent Representatives.

On 12 December the Security Council adopted resolution 2080 (2012), by which it extended the term of office of the five judges of the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda until 31 December 2014, or until completion of the cases to which they had been assigned, if sooner. The Council requested the Tribunal to report, as a part of its pending report to the Council on the completion strategy, the projected schedule of the coordinated transition of functions of the Mechanism with a view to completing all remaining work in the Tribunal and its closure as early as possible and no later than 31 December 2014.

On 17 December the Security Council adopted resolution 2081 (2012) with 14 votes in favour, none against, and 1 abstention. The resolution requested the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to take all possible measures to complete its work as expeditiously as possible with the aim to facilitate the closure of the Tribunal, taking into account resolution 1966 (2010). The Council also requested the Tribunal to present by 15 April 2013 a consolidated comprehensive plan on the completion strategy, closure and transition to the Mechanism, and updated and detailed schedules for each of the individual cases with a timeline for each procedural part of the case. The Council decided to examine this plan before 30 June 2013 with a view to considering what further recommendations should be made to facilitate the Tribunal's progress towards completion, which could include recommendations on all possible measures to scrutinize the operation and functioning of the Tribunal with the objective of ensuring the most efficient use of the Tribunal's resources and the completion of the Tribunal's mandate.

The Council decided to extend the term of office of five Appeals Chamber judges at the Tribunal and eight permanent Trial Chambers judges until 31 December 2013 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner. It decided also to extend the term of office of four ad litem judges of the Trial Chambers until 1 June 2013 and those of four other ad litem Trial Chamber judges, until 31 December 2013 or until the completion of the cases to which they were assigned, if sooner.

Non-proliferation

Islamic Republic of Iran

On 13 December 2012, Néstor Osorio, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), presented to the Security Council the 90-day report of the Committee covering the period from 13 September to 4 December 2012, during which the Committee held one meeting and conducted additional work using the no-objection procedure.

The Chair said that the Committee continued its discussion on implementing the recommendations contained in the final report of 4 June 2012 of the United Nations Panel of Experts (S/2012/395), and was briefed by the Panel on its midterm report of 9 November, which was submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 2049 (2012). He further informed the Security Council that the Committee also discussed, among other issues, the possibility of issuing a guidance note to aid States in their submission of national implementation reports, and sending letters to States requesting them to provide, on a voluntary basis, additional identifiers for individuals subject to travel bans and asset freezes. During the reporting period, the

Committee received a number of communications relating to steps taken to implement the relevant Council resolutions and encouraged all States to cooperate with the Committee and its Panel of Experts in the investigation of possible sanctions violations.

Following the briefing, Security Council members renewed their firm support for the work of the Committee and the Panel of Experts and expressed appreciation to the outgoing Chair of the Committee for his efforts since January 2010.

Several members expressed concern regarding the continued non-compliance of the Islamic Republic of Iran with Security Council and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) resolutions, particularly with regard to alleged illicit arms smuggling, and called for the rigorous implementation of sanctions. They also highlighted the further development by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its nuclear programme. Other members called for balance between sanctions and dialogue in order to achieve a negotiated solution.

Security Council members underlined the importance for the Islamic Republic of Iran to observe its international obligations. They reiterated their support for dialogue in the framework of the five plus one group and the Islamic Republic of Iran and hoped that discussions between IAEA and the country would lead to an agreement on a structured approach to resolving outstanding issues pertaining to the country's nuclear programme.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 12 December, the Security Council held consultations of the whole to address the serious situation and the concerns arising from the launch on the same day, conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea using ballistic missile technology.

Members of the Security Council agreed on press elements condemning the launch as a clear violation of resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). They recalled that in April 2012 they had demanded that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not proceed with any further launches using ballistic missile technology and also expressed the Council's determination to take action accordingly in the event of a further launch. Members of the Council announced that they would continue consultations on an appropriate response, in accordance with the Council's responsibilities given the urgency of the matter.

Thematic and other issues

Inter-mission cooperation

The Security Council held, on 12 December, a briefing to discuss the question of inter-mission cooperation of peacekeeping operations, with the participation of the Minister for State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Paulo Portas, and Pavan Kapoor, a high official of the Government of India. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Ameerah Haq, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, briefed the Member States on the subject discussed.

In their statements, members of the Security Council admitted that cooperation among neighbouring missions enabled a rapid response during several crises and

emergency situations. At the same time they underlined that each and every mission should have the resources it needs to carry out its own mandate and cannot address long-standing capacity gaps.

To this end, Security Council members stressed that the basis for success in this kind of cooperation between peacekeeping operations was linked with interrelated factors such as the realism of the mandates established by the Council and the necessary cooperation between and among the Council, the troop-contributing countries, the host country and the Secretariat.

Many members noted that although inter-mission cooperation can provide a rapid response in time of crisis and emergency situations, this mechanism remained an ad hoc one. They mentioned that while recognizing the potential of this tool, it was necessary to note that inter-mission cooperation should not be considered as a permanent solution to the structural problems that hinder the effectiveness of peacekeeping.

Briefing by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

On 7 December, the Security Council received briefings from the five outgoing Chairs of its subsidiary bodies: Hardeep Singh Puri, Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea; Peter Wittig, Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) and Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict; Néstor Osorio, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006); José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions; and Baso Sangqu, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

Sanctions regime concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

On 17 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 2083 (2012), by which it decided to review the implementation of the sanctions measures outlined in the same resolution in 18 months and make adjustments, as necessary. The Council decided, in order to assist the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) in fulfilling its mandate, as well as to support the Ombudsperson, to extend the mandate of the Monitoring Team and its members, established pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 1526 (2004), for a further period of 30 months. The Council decided to extend the mandate of the Office of the Ombudsperson, established by resolution 1904 (2009), for a period of 30 months.

Sanctions regime pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)

On 17 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 2082 (2012), by which it decided to review the implementation of the sanctions measures outlined in the same resolution in 18 months and make adjustments, as necessary, to support peace and stability in Afghanistan. The Council also decided, in order to assist the

Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) in fulfilling its mandate, that the 1267 Monitoring Team, established pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 1526 (2004), should also support the Committee for a period of 30 months, with the mandate set forth in the annex of the resolution.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

On 20 December, the Security Council held an open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding, with the participation of 41 delegations. Council members had before them the report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/746). In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General commended the significant progress achieved in advancing the peacebuilding agenda and underlined the three elements that were critical to preventing relapse and producing more resilient States and societies, namely inclusivity, institution-building and sustained international support.

In the presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/29) adopted during the meeting, Security Council members stressed the need for more coordinated, coherent and integrated efforts and emphasized the importance of focused, well-defined, balanced and sustained support to partnerships with post-conflict countries. The Council also recognized the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding and reaffirmed that national ownership and national responsibility were key to establishing sustainable peace.